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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER
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GLESSNER, BRIAN E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3635

DATE MAILED: 03/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/822,353

Applicant(s)

PALIDIS, ANASTASIOS

Examiner

Brian E. Glessner

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 18-23 and 28-37 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 24-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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In regard to claim 17, the scope of the claim is unclear because the claim states that the connector is used to connect a floor to a drilling rig substructure. The examiner is not certain if the applicant is trying to claim the combination of a connector and a drilling rig, or if applicant is merely trying to claim a function of the connector. The examiner will examine the claim in the second manner indicated above until further clarification is provided.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 5, and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yorke (1,090,955).

In regard to claims 1-3, 5, 8 and 9, York discloses a structural connector comprising a support plate 1b (fig. 3) comprising a plurality of fixed support members (fig. 4) having substantially vertical side walls, i.e. the side walls are located on portion 13 and are substantially vertical as shown in fig. 4, and contoured tops, a mating lug assembly 14, 14 comprising a pair of mating lug plates, i.e. the plate attached to member 1a (fig. 3), and a plurality of mating lugs, i.e. the portion attached to member 1b (fig. 3), attached to each mating lug plate, each mating lug having a support notch 11a therein that is shaped and sized to mate with the fixed support member and has substantially vertical side walls and contoured top surfaces, wherein the fixed support

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members extend outwardly from both sides of the support plate. The structural connector also carries a vertical and horizontal load on the contoured top surfaces and sidewalls of the support notches and the fixed support members.

In regard to claim 7, Yorke discloses the claimed invention except for specifically disclosing that cutting the shape of the support notch into the mating lug plates forms the mating lugs. The examiner would like to point out that the step of "cutting" is a method, or process step and is not given much weight in an apparatus claim. See MPEP 2113. Therefore, since Yorke discloses the finished product, the claim limitations are met.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yorke (1,090,955).

In regard to claim 6, Yorke discloses the claimed invention except for specifically disclosing that the lugs are welded to the plates. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to weld the lugs to the plates instead of integrally forming the two members, because welding is a well known means for connecting steel pieces together.

Claims 4, 10-17, and 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yorke (1,090,955) in view of Goya (5,845,453).

In regard to claim 4, Yorke discloses the claimed invention except for specifically disclosing the use of tapered guide surfaces. Goya teaches that it is known to use tapered guide surfaces at the opening end of a notch. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate said surfaces into Yorke's invention, because it is well known in the art that the tapered surfaces will facilitate insertion of the fixed support member during assembly.

In regard to claims 10-16, Yorke in view of Goya disclose the basic claimed invention. Claims 10-16 contain the same limitations as claims 1-9. Therefore, claims 10-16 are rejected on the same grounds of rejection set forth above with respect to claims 1-9, wherein Yorke teaches all of the limitations except for the tapered guide surfaces.

In regard to claim 17, Yorke in view of Goya disclose the basic claimed invention, wherein the structural connector is capable of connecting a unitized equipment floor of a drilling rig to a substructure of a drilling rig.

In regard to claim 24-27, Yorke in view of Goya disclose a method of connecting structural components comprising providing a first structural component 5 with one or more support plates 1b attached thereto, providing each support plate with a plurality of fixed support members 9 extending there through, providing a second structural component 1a with one or more mating lug assemblies attached thereto, providing each mating lug with a support notch, positioning the first structural component and the

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second structural component for connection, and guiding the fixed support members of the support plates into engagement. The structure of the lug assemblies and support plates and limitations of claims 25-27 can be seen in the above rejections.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 18-23 and 28-37 are allowed.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Adams, Phillips, Upton, Taylor, Williams, Hirsch, Harrison, Best, Byfield et al., Goya and Simmons.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian E. Glessner whose telephone number is 703-305-0031. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 7:00-4:00.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl Friedman can be reached on 703-308-0839. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

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Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>.

Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Brian E. Glessner  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3635

B.G.  
March 3, 2005